Contents: SBWN Retreat, Volunteers, Sappho, Woman Soldier, Poetry

NORTH Bi NORTHWEST

Newsletter of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, a member project of Gay Community Social Services

APRIL/MAY 1995 VOLUME 8, NUMBER 2

We're Here, We're Queer, We Volunteer!

Interviews with the Hardworking Women of SBWN...

Acknowledging some of the other volunteer work SBWN volunteers do;

in honor of National Volunteer Week, April 23-29, 1995.

by Siri Schroder

The call came two weeks ago to the **Northwest Aids Foundation** resource and referral line. He was worried about the sex he'd had last night. Was it unsafe? Based on what he told her, he didn't really have to worry, she reassured him. She took the next call.

An hour and a half later there was a call to the Foundation asking for Laurie. It was the man she'd talked to earlier, who wanted to thank her. He was crying. Later, he donated $100 to NWAF, and got tested. "People are terrified," she says.

Laurie H. has worked the NWAF phone line for nearly four months now. A shift is four hours once a week, and involves taking many kinds of calls, from requests of safer sex information one on one to requests for a group speaker. When asked why she chose volunteering for this organization she mentioned two interests: to get more involved in the gay community, and to be involved in health care education. She likes everything about her job and says, "Write Congress and ask them to appropriate more funds!"

Brenda P. also works for the **Northwest Aids Foundation**, doing outreach. This involves giving safer sex information and/or supplies to people in cruise spots such as bars, bathhouses, and parks.

She got involved 'accidentally,' when an NWAF speaker at an SBWN meeting talked about her own outreach job and Brenda realized she could do it. Now that she is doing it she has made the discovery that she can "go up to total strangers and talk about sex" (it still embarrasses her when they ask her about her sex life). Men are "more receptive... women tend to be in denial," she reports.

Shifts run approximately one and a half to two hours twice a month, and there is one mandatory monthly meeting. She has worked there two and a half years and says, "I like being connected to gay and lesbian communities through it... and to STD's, AIDS — what's going on." When asked for a final comment about her work, Brenda says, "We need more volunteers — VOLUNTEER!"

Peggy Walsh, whose inspiration this tribute to women is, shared the following with *North Bi Northwest* on her own volunteer work:

"I've worked with **New Beginnings Shelter for Battered Women and their Children** since 1977, about a year after they opened and a year after I arrived in Seattle from the East Coast. I'd worked for something like the crisis clinic in Philadelphia and wanted to get involved here in some sort of community service.

"In the years before I left Philadelphia, I'd been involved in a dangerous intimate relationship with an abusive partner. When I saw a write-up on a new local women's shelter in the daily newspaper, it looked like just the place for me to volunteer.

"I've done just about everything for this place. When I started my work there, I was one of very few volunteers who knew where the actual shelter was; most worked in the office. Since I had a car and days free, I provided a lot of transportation: escorts to attorneys; to doctors,

More 'Volunteers' on page 14

Join! $10-50/year, sliding scale.
I want to wear my bisexuality in my wallet. Make me a card carrying bisexual! Enclosed is $_____ for a one-year membership.

Subscribe! $10/year, flexible.
I want to receive the latest bi news, opinions, writing and art six times a year. Enclosed is $_____ for a one-year subscription.

Total enclosed: _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Prov _____

Zip/Postal Zone _____ Phone (optional) _____

How did you hear about us? _____

All contributions are tax-deductible
Please enclose cash, or checks made payable to SBWN
Send to: SBWN, PO Box 30645, Greenwood Station, Seattle, WA 98103-0645

Join the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network and become a card-carrying bisexual!

This certifies that
Your Name Here
is a card carrying
♀♀♂♂ BISEXUAL ♀♀♂♂
and is a member in good standing of
The Seattle Bisexual Women's Network

Date _____ SBWN Coordinating Committee _____

Memberships are $10-50 a year on a sliding scale, and are open to women everywhere. Members are entitled to discounts on events and purchases. See mail-in form above.

SBWN Statement of Purpose

We are a group of women from diverse backgrounds working to create a feminist bisexual support network and to promote, in both the heterosexual world and in the lesbian/gay community, the understanding and acceptance of bisexuality as one of many valid sexual identities.

We regard ourselves as part of the community that is united against heterosexism and homophobia. We are dedicated to the right of all people to define their own sexuality, free from any social, political, or economic coercion. The discriminations we face on the bases of our gender and our sexuality are not the only forms of oppression. We recognize that oppression is non-hierarchical and that none of us is free until all of us are free. We are invested in the feminist struggle to transform our culture into one free of all forms of bigotry, hatred, and exploitation.

We seek to provide a safe place for women to explore all aspects of their sexual orientation and identity. All women are welcome to attend SBWN activities. We are exclusively a women's group in order to create a safe space for women's expression and leadership. We come together to affirm ourselves and our choices.

North Bi Northwest *is the bimonthly newsletter of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network. It is produced by women and is feminist in content. We feature news and events pertinent to the bisexual community, as well as creative writing, artwork, and an advice column.*

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We welcome submissions from women and men that concern feminism, politics, sexuality, or anything of interest to bisexual women. Help define our culture! Share your histories, anger, pleasure, energy. Send us your essays, poetry, photographs, drawings, book reviews, short stories, interviews, media reports, rants, cartoons, erotica, journals, theory, conversations and letters. You're important to us and what you have to say is important to everyone.

We accept input on disk with *hard copy (Mac or PC), typed, or handwritten if it's legible. If you send us something to print, you get a free issue; send six and get a year's subscription! Let us know what pseudonym you use, if you do not want to publish under your everyday name.*

Views expressed in North Bi Northwest *are those of individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of SBWN. Inclusion in this publication does not indicate author's sexual orientation.*

Deadline for submissions to the next issue: Wed. May 3. (see address above).

North Bi Northwest is printed on bi paper! (50% recycled).

North Bi Northwest

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Peggy Walsh,
Lizabeth Coller
& other Volunteers

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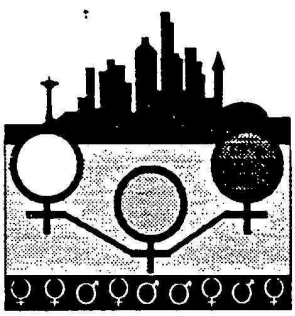


Seattle Bisexual
Women's Network
PO Box 30645
Greenwood Station
Seattle WA 98103-0645

SBWN can always use volunteers to help with a variety of tasks. Give us a call or talk to a facilitator at a meeting.

North Bi Northwest is available by subscription (see above) or at area bookstores and newsstands, including: in Seattle, **Red and Black Books, Beyond the Closet, Bailey Coy Books, Fremont Place Book Company**, and **Toys in Babeland**.

North Bi Northwest is a publication of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, a member project of Gay Community Social Services, PO Box 22228, Seattle, WA 98122-0228. (Not for correspondence with SBWN or *North Bi Northwest*).

From the Editors...

SBWN's retreat has come and gone (see pgs 8-9 for reports), and we're channeling the new energy and trying to become more organized. It looks good!

We've been 'out there' quite a lot lately: we spread the word at Seattle's International Women's Day event, talked on KIRO radio, spoke to a class at Highline Community College, are preparing presentations to PFLAG and Gender Share, and were 500-strong at NWAF's Bisexual Mardi Gras (including bisexuals from Portland OR, Vancouver BC and Boise ID). What a party!

April 3 inaugurates our new meeting format, on trial through June. We're keeping the alternate-Sunday (6pm), alternate-Monday (7:15pm) schedule, but redefining the character of the meetings. The first meeting of a month is 'Organizational,' where we take care of business, make plans, check in with committees; everyone is encouraged to attend to voice opinions and help keep the group going. The second meeting is 'Open Rap, Newcomer Format,' where the night's discussion comes from that night's attendees; all are welcome, and newcomers are especially encouraged to check in here. Subsequent meetings will be pre-planned topics, some with guest presenters. See page 16 or check our phone line for details.

BiNet/Oregon has invited us to join them in a camp-out at American Ridge, near Mount Rainier, on July 10-12. We've extended the invitation to BiFace/Vancouver, and BiNet/Boise. There's a move afoot to precede the outing with a North West Bi Fest here in Seattle on July 8-9, so people from the various groups can do some networking. The last big campout was a blast! So reserve the dates and pack your tent!

And remember, Seattle's Pride March and Rally will be held on Sunday, June 25!

Looking to the Future

SBWN has come up with the following three-month goals:

-get our phone system in good working order
-develop a social phone list
-have a presence at Pride
-establish newcomer buddy system
-join Women Take Back the Night
-find new GCSS liaison
-increase newsletter subscriptions
-redefine 'Membership' and develop some privileges for paid members
-get the secretary more organized
-apply for a grant
-plan another retreat
-increase membership
-engage more volunteers
-have a fundraiser within the year
-further develop BiOut speakers' bureau

Join Us!

Through listing the services of SBWN at our retreat, we arrived at the following general list of who we are now and who we want to be. If you can see yourself helping with any of these functions, talk to any meeting's facilitator, or leave a message on our phone machine. We'll soon publish contact people for various activities. We're sorting out the details, mostly at the first meetings of the month.

FACILITATORS' COLLECTIVE
OUTREACH
POLITICAL ACTION
NEWSLETTER TEAM
VOLUNTEER COORDINATION
SOCIAL PLANNING
MEMBERSHIP
EDUCATION
FUNDRAISER
LIBRARIAN
GAY COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES LIAISON
SECRETARY
TREASURER

WHO WERE WE AT THIS RETREAT?
HERE ARE SOME DEMOGRAPHICS:

	20's	30's	40's	50's
AGE	6	5	4	1
SINGLE	5	2	1	0
MARRIED	1	3	3	1

IN A SURVEY OF 80 MEETING TOPICS:

40 HAD NO INTEREST
16 HAD 1 CHECK MARK
14 HAD 2 CHECK MARKS

40% CHECKED:
EROTICA & PORNOGRAPHY
LESBIAN & BISEXUAL WOMEN: TOWARD A SEXUAL MINORITY

33% CHECKED:
INITIATING RELATIONSHIPS
SEX & SEXUAL ATTRACTION

26% CHECKED:
BUILDING A NATIONAL BISEXUAL NETWORK
SAFER SEX PARTIES
WITCHES & GODDESS WORSHIP

20% CHECKED:
THE OPTION OF CASUAL SEX
INTIMACY
NON-MONOGAMY

NEWSY BITS

Caution: Court in Session; Legal Hazards Ahead

In Colorado, the legislature **failed to pass** a measure that would have included **sexual orientation in the hate crimes** law for that state.

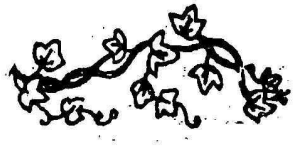
In other news, the US Supreme Court has agreed to hear arguments about whether Colorado's anti-gay Amendment 2 — or any such law — violates the Constitution's equal protection guarantees. The Court will also be considering whether **Irish lesbian** and gay marchers can be kept out of Boston's annual **St. Patrick's Day parade**. Decisions will probably not be announced until next year. (GayNet)

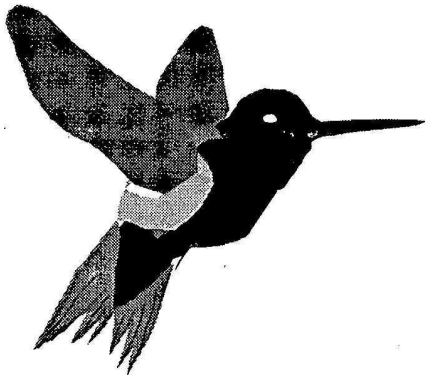
Several states, including South Dakota and Utah, are **considering anti-gay marriage bills**, in response to the possibility that Hawaii courts might make same-sex marriages legal. At this time, a marriage performed legally in any state is recognized by all other states. (GayNet)

Locally, the country's first **legal challenge** to Clinton's **gay military policy** is being heard in Federal Court in Seattle. Chief Petty Officer Mark Philips, stationed out of Bremerton, is being discharged for admitting to having had homosexual sex off-base. (Skagit Gay Times, Mar. 95)

The Religious Right (Reich) is **in our schools** too. Senate Bill 5498 and House Bill 1172 contain language about 'the right of the parents to decide what their children learn and how they are taught in the common schools.' It includes an item about 'employees... may not be required to provide instruction... relating to... human sexuality education, ...diseases including HIV or AIDS education.' Also, 'a school may not use guidance counseling regarding a student's social, emotional, mental, or personal problems without prior consultation with a parent and obtaining written permission of the parent.'

A U.S. District Court Judge, Alexander Harvey II, ruled that **federal sexual harassment laws do not apply** to members of the same gender. The dismissed lawsuit, by David Hopkins, a former Baltimore Gas & Electric Co work, charged his male job supervisor had made unwanted sexual advances to him at work. (Skagit Gay Times, Feb 1995)





The Press

The Family Next Door is a national bimonthly magazine for **lesbian and gay parents** and their friends. For a free copy, or to subscribe, write to Next Door Publishing, PO Box 21580, Oakland CA 94620.

Related to this: three new studies reported in *Developmental Psychology* suggest **homosexual parents raise well-adjusted children**. The absence of a father or the presence of gay parents does not interfere with a child's emotional development. (Willamette Week Vol 21 # 15)

Token, a queer magazine from Columbia University, lists such items as Bisexual Politics, **Outing Bisexual History**, and A Queers of Color Manifesto. For more info, Token Magazine, Box 810, 3001 Broadway, NY NY 10027-6598; e-mail vcm2@columbia.edu. (BiWomen, Vol 13, # 1)

Hollywood Presents

Look for ***The Incredibly True Adventures of Two Girls in Love*** at a movie theater near you. This is a comedy about two teenage lesbians who overcome different socioeconomic backgrounds to find each other. Maria Maggenti's film will be distributed by Fine Line Features here in the States. (Skagit Gay Times, March 1995)

Also on the silver screen: ***Bar Girls***, a lesbian romantic comedy directed by Marita Giovanni, from Lauran Hoffman's script. The film revolves around the romances of eight women who hang out in a bar, as some couples break up and others get together.

Maybe there's hope for TV, after all. NBC reports that the advertising during the showing of **'Serving in Silence: The Margarethe Cammermeyer Story'** sold out. While some advertisers did withdraw, there were others to replace them, at full rates. (Variety)

Conferences

'The Fate of Feminism: Is there a Next Generation?' is the subject for the Fifth Annual Women's Studies Conference, to be held at Southern Connecticut State University. For more info contact Karen Radmani (203)392-6747, radman@scsud.ctstateu.edu or Vera Neverow, neverow@scsud.ctstateu.edu, 203-392-6747. (BiWomen, Vol 13, No 1)

The ZEGG folks (initials for the German **Center for Experimental Cultural Design**) are offering a six week tour of Spain, Portugal, Tenerife and Germany, for $3200. This includes travel, most food, workshops and accommodations. For more info contact Dr. Heide Davis, HC2 Box 96T, Payson AZ 85541.

BECAUSE **(Bisexual Empowerment Conference: A Uniting Supportive Experience)** is having their annual conference this April 7-9, at the University of Minnesota. The topic this year is Who is Bisexual?: Exploring Our Communities and Cultures. For more info, Maureen at 612-725-0538, or BECAUSE, PO Box 23172, Richfield MN 55423.

GREEN DESERT

by Carlyle

The grass might be greener
on the other side.
But than what makes
green
so much better?
A desert
on this side
appears yellowish
in my experience.
I thought that if
I tried hard enough
I might begin to see it
green.
And so I did
see an illusion.
Live an illusion.

Desert simply exists
here and now.
On this side.
And on that side.

Trying to make a desert
green
or anything else
grows more frustration
than anything else.

Even holding onto
letting go of
green
is also about
the other side.

While entering the fear
here,
giving up the idea of control
now,
accepting myself and desert and
relating
brings forth a vibrant experiencing
in a moment
on this side.

Sarah Hospador

Deborah Sampson:
First American Woman at War

by Lizabeth Coller

There still seems to be need for discussion over whether a woman can serve in the military, in a combat position. Why does this question persist? We all know women have been involved in wars since the beginning of time, as watchers, nurses, supporters. There are many stories of women taking up a rifle after their husbands were killed, in self-defense. So why do people continue to think women cannot take care of themselves under fire?

Some time ago, I found a reference to the number of women who fought in the Civil War, cross-dressed as men. This led me to find Deborah Sampson, who fought in the Revolutionary War as a man. She was not paid during her service, but in 1792 was found to have 'exhibited an extraordinary instance of female heroism by discharging the duties of a faithful, gallant soldier' and was granted 34 pounds as compensation. She was given a pension, becoming the first woman in US history to receive a soldier's pension, and after her death her family was given benefits due to those whose husbands or fathers had died of wounds received in the service.

The sixth of eight children of a drinking man and his strong wife, Deborah saw her mother run the family farm. Her father left for England when she was 5, and died in a ship wreck. Her mother then gave away the older 6 children, sending Deborah to live with a woman cousin. She lived with several other families until she turned 18. She then started teaching in 1779, and earned room and board by spinning and weaving cloth.

In late 1781 or early '82 Deborah dressed as a man, and enlisted as Timothy Thayer. She received a cash bounty, and drank some of it away that night. When Mr. Thayer failed to report for duty, Deborah was found out. She convinced the officer she had signed as a prank, and gave back the money, but word got around, and her church excommunicated her.

In the spring of 1782, she again dressed in a man's suit, made from material she had woven. She took off at night, and on May 20, 1782, she signed enlistment papers for three years, under the name Robert Shurtliff, the first and second name of her oldest brother,

who had died at the age of eight, before she was born. She was 22 years old, though her enlistment papers say she was 17; she needed an excuse for why she could not grow a beard.

Deborah was assigned to a special group of the Light Infantry Division called the Rangers. She saw battle many times, and was praised for her bravery by superior officers. She found it ironic that if she were found out, she would have been censured more for wielding a gun and bayonet in defense of her country than the prostitutes who followed the companies were.

Her first close call with being found out was when she was wounded in battle. She sustained a saber blow to the head, and a musket ball to her left inner thigh. Some accounts say she hid the leg wound, while others say she dug the metal ball out herself. In either case, this wound took a long time to heal, and gave her problems all her life.

Deborah's secret was not discovered until the end of the war. Sick with fever, she was taken to a hospital. As the doctor made an attempt to see if she were still alive, he discovered the linen she used to bind her breasts. He took measures to take care of her, giving away her secret only to the matron of the hospital ward.

Some months later, though, as the war was over and the army disbanded, Dr. Binney wrote a letter to Deborah's commanding officer, telling of her masquerade. Of course there was disbelief; the men who had lived next to her had never suspected. Her bravery and courage, and her willingness to do anything for the war effort, allowed all to believe she was what she looked like: a young fighting man.

After being discharged in 1784, it took her some time before she went back to wearing women's clothing. She farmed for a relative's family, then met and eventually married Benjamin Gannett, Jr.

Deborah gave birth to one son and two daughters, and took in another girl, whose mother had died when the child was five days old.

Over the years, postwar inflation took its toll in the Gannett family, and Deborah told her story to Herman Mann, a printer and editorial writer for the *Village Register*, Dedham, MA. Whether she ever received money from the resulting book is not known. Mann also persuaded Deborah to go on a lecture tour. She dressed in a replica of her uniform, running through a number of maneuvers with her rifle. The talk she gave had little actual details from her war experiences, but did contain an apology: "My achievements are a breach in the decorum of my sex, unquestionably."

In 1792 Deborah petitioned for back pay for her time in the Army. She received 34 pounds, a little more than $100, for 18 months of service. In 1804, with the help of Paul Revere, she was granted an invalid pension

from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. She was then granted a pension under a Congressional act in 1818, given to veterans with a minimum of 9 months of service.

Deborah died in 1831, at the age of 68. Her husband petitioned Congress for the continuation of Deborah's pension, saying her war wounds had shortened her life. This was granted in 1838, making Benjamin Gannett the first man to receive a pension from the US government for military service his wife, not he, performed.

A final note: during February, Black History Month, I saw a reference to the first woman to serve in the military as being Black. I tracked the book down, and found this:
'One soldier, 'Robert Shurtliff,' turned out to be a woman, generally believed to be colored, who had served 18 months in the patriot army. Her state of MA rewarded Deborah Gannett for an extraordinary instance of female heroism."

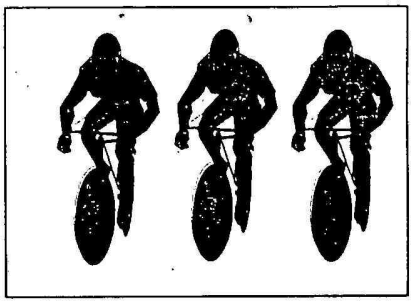
I have been unable to find collaborating information.

In any case, Deborah Sampson was an interesting woman, who followed her dreams. Her experiences go a long way toward arguing that women are as capable as men, on the battle field, or off.

References:

Cheney, Cora. *The Incredible Deborah: A Story Based on the Life of Deborah Sampson.* Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967.
Freeman, Lucy, and Alma Bond, Ph.D. *America's First Woman Warrior: The Courage of Deborah Sampson.* Paragon House, 1992.
Katz, William L. *Eyewitness: The Negro in American History.* Pitman Publishing Corporation, 1967.
McCain, Diana Ross. "Private Deborah Sampson of the Continental Army." *Early American Life* . Vol XXIV, Number 2 (April 1993), pg 16-18, 74-75.

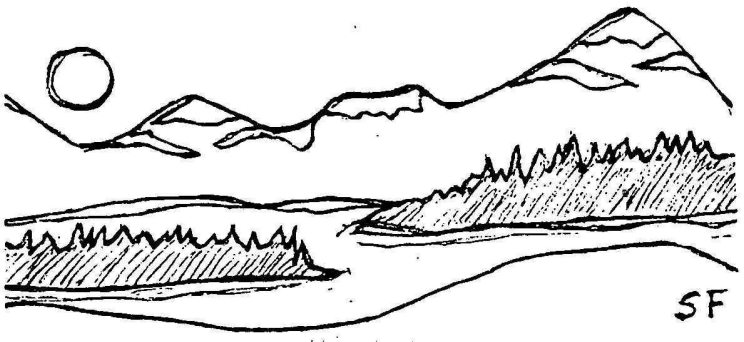
New Seattle Lesbian Bicycling Group Pedals Away



Seattle Womyn on Wheels invites lesbians and other women bicyclists to join our bicycling season. We offer easy, moderate, and training pace rides along with off road mountain biking. We are comprised of lesbians of all levels of experience who are interested in riding with other women. We view ourselves as a community resource for all area women, and we will be stressing safety and consistence in ride format.

Ride start locations will vary so that we can offer a broad range of ride loops and destinations. Look for a mid-week evening ride as the season picks up, and rides with the organized bike events this summer.
Upcoming rides are 4/2—Rattlesnake Lake; 4/2—MOHI to N. end Lk. Washington; 4/9—Gasworks to Luna Park, West Seattle;
4/15—Bainbridge Island loop; 4/23—Daffodil Classic in Orting;
4/30—Gasworks to Bothell Landing.
For information contact Virginia, 527-1852 or Sandi, 323-2169. Each ride has a different leader/contact person.

The Cascade Bicycle Club, in listing WOW in their resources, found themselves unable to use the word 'lesbian,' and lists the group for 'women' bicyclists. They cite 'controversy' within their board.
(ed note: I recently joined them in the Golden Gardens ride. It was fun!)



Sandra F.

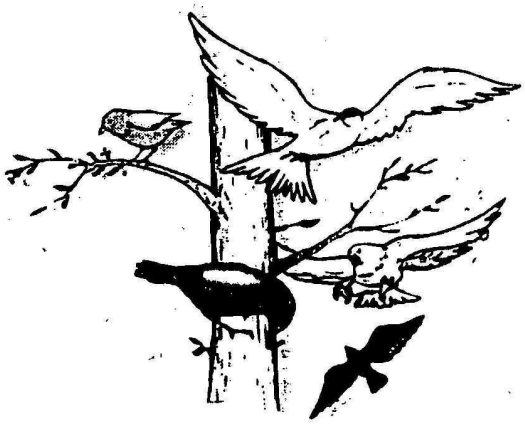
Diva Dance! Saturday, May 13. Uncover the goddess in you at a women-only Diva Dance at Crossroads Learning Center on Capitol Hill at 1412 12th Ave, 8PM—Midnight. A very fun and creative undress party with body paints and snacks provided. Smoke/alcohol free. Bring a drum! $25-10 sliding scale. Pre-register at 206-325-8790.

The Center for Movement Arts & Therapy is offering several classes for women only. "Heart & Soul: Moving from the Heart as a source for well being" is offered Tuesday mornings. Its focus will be on how to **return to being the holders of love and still be held.** 'Rocking the Cradle: Opening to Creative Sexual Force through the Pelvis' is a weekend workshop, working on how we stifle movement, and ways to unlearn this and move naturally again. The Center also has classes open to men and women. A free participatory intro is held the first Saturday of each month, 10am-noon. For more info, call 547-8034. Center is at 418 N 35th St in Fremont.

Are you a **disabled bisexual, lesbian, or transgendered woman?** Shelly Tremain is looking for stories, poems, narratives, and other writing as well as black and white art, for an anthology. Write to her, c/o Women's Press, 233-517 College St, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6G 4A2. (BiWomen, Vol 13, No 1)

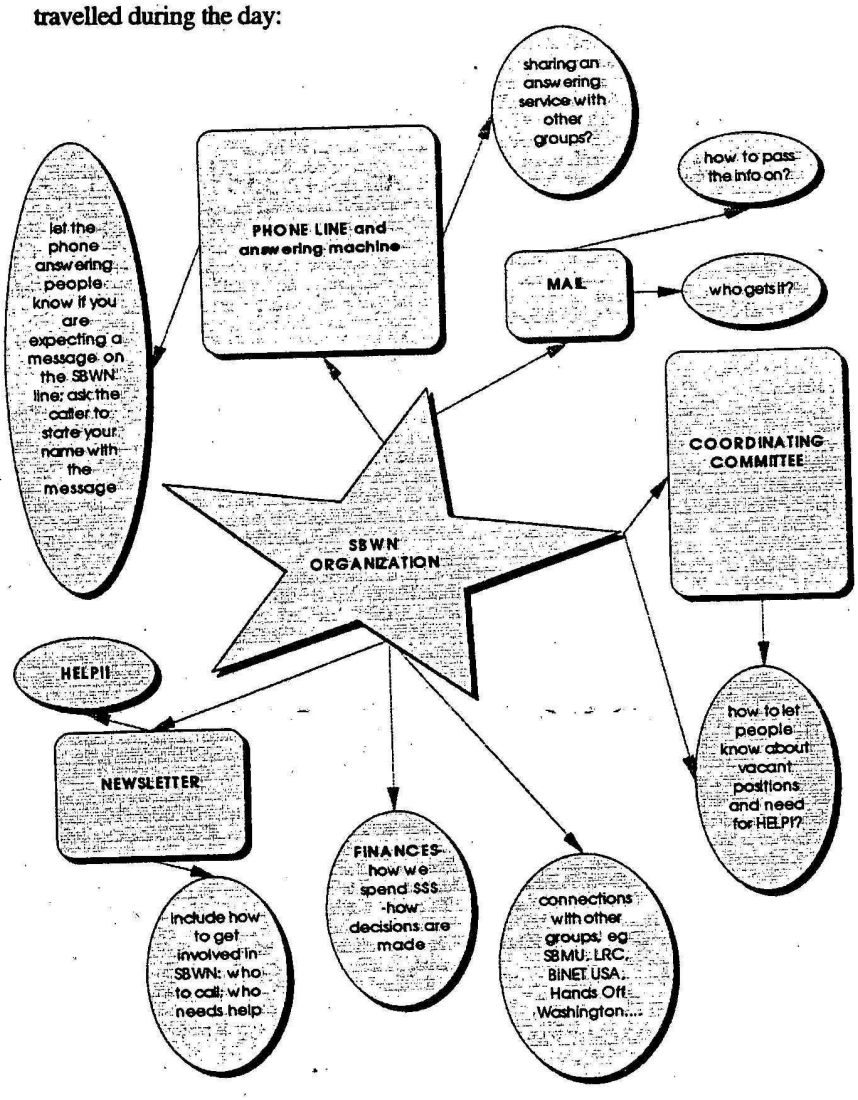
On Oyster Beach

by Carlyle



The first weekend in March set the stage for the 'First and Fabulous SBWN Frolic in the Forest Retreat.' We were warmly welcomed by the Lutheran Retreat Center, whose billboard of activities announced us as 'The Seattle Women's Network.' The only rules they asked us to respect was not to cuss (does that include using the word 'bisexual?'), and even allowed us to bunk together! Anyhow, the first frolic in the forest was more of a mind-engaging meeting in the mess hall. We began at 11AM by discussing facilitation of meetings and ended at 9PM with tired minds and enthusiastic hearts to work together on making SBWN more alive and more participatory (another way of saying sharing the load). In between, we had Lizabeth's compilation of topics for meetings over the last several years, Peggy's historical account of how SBWN has grown itself, and Regina's facilitated exercises with balloons.

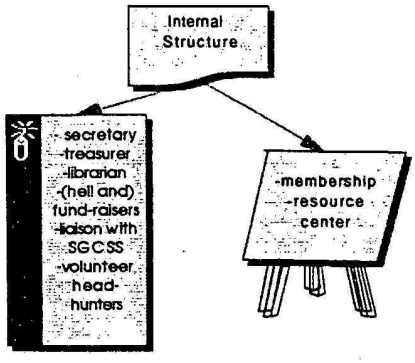
The following illustrates a bit of the journey in discussion that we travelled during the day:

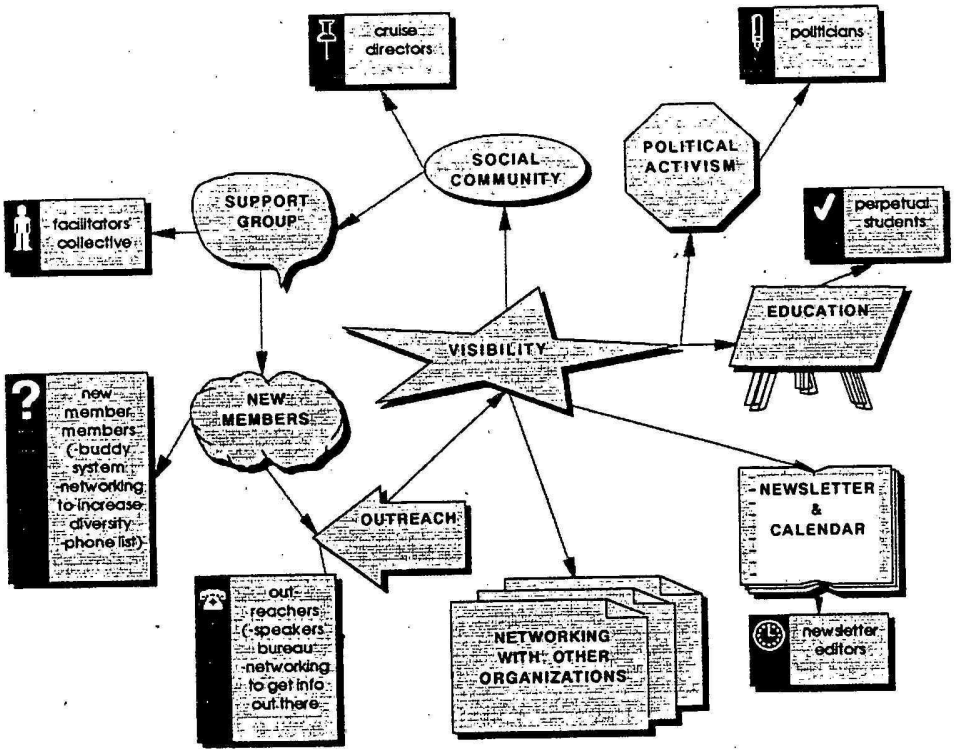

sharing an answering service with other groups?
PHONE LINE and answering machine
let the phone answering people know if you are expecting a message on the SBWN line; ask the caller to state your name with the message
how to pass the info on?
MAIL
who gets it?
COORDINATING COMMITTEE
SBWN ORGANIZATION
HELP!!
NEWSLETTER
include how to get involved in SBWN; who to call; who needs help
FINANCES how we spend $$$ -how decisions are made
connections with other groups, eg SBMU, LRC, BINET USA, Hands Off Washington....
how to let people know about vacant positions and need for HELP!?

Basic Structure

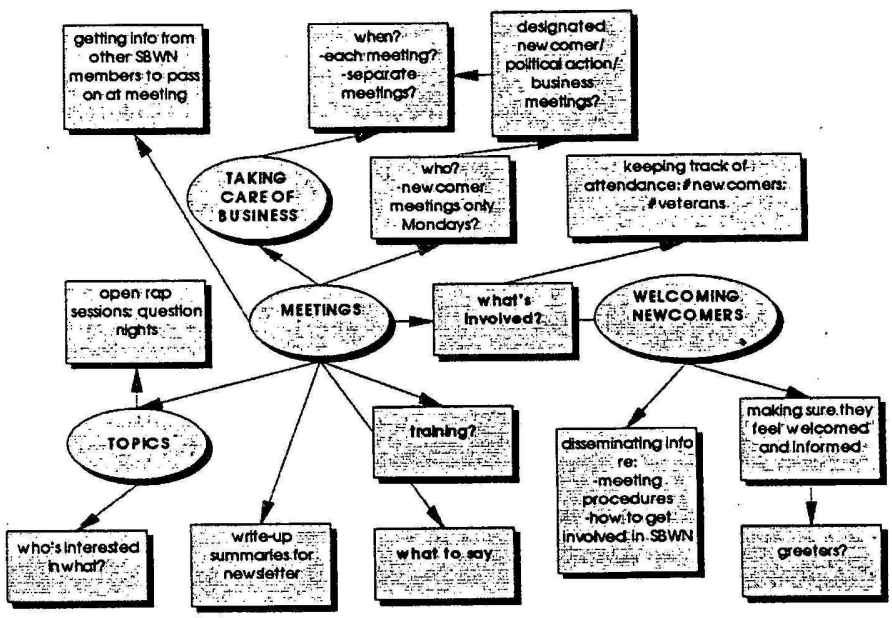
Other highlights of the overnight included the great spread that Regina supplied for us, including sizzling sandwiches, scrumptious soup and (need we say more) S'mores and chocolate chip pancakes in varied shapes (we'll leave that to your imagination!). And of course, the *real* fun began after the sun went down....

After releasing energy on walks by starlight and car lights, and testing our perseverance and coordination through juggling, the party moved from the kitchen to the bedroom — in several senses of the word. Manicures and pedicures were not the only entertainment provided by some of our more verbally expressive members, unabashed to share their experiences and stories. We had discussions ranging from our most humorous sexual experiences, toys, diapers and lactating women, to 'has anyone ever tried...?' We laughed about the third 'first time,' the gymnastics of double-headed entry into one hole, and 'Fuck Me Red' nail color. Female ejaculation, sex toys from the hardware store, and interesting uses of clothespins were also news to some and tales of experience for others. Our educational session came to a close with a few erotic bedtime stories, which dispersed us to separate rooms and interpretations of 'bedtime.'





Outreach


getting info from other SBWN members to pass on at meeting
when? -each meeting? -separate meetings?
designated newcomer/ political action/ business meetings?
TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS
who? -newcomer meetings only Mondays?
keeping track of attendance: #newcomers: #veterans
open rap sessions: question nights
MEETINGS
what's involved?
WELCOMING NEWCOMERS
TOPICS
training?
disseminating info re: -meeting procedures -how to get involved in SBWN
making sure they feel welcomed and informed
who's interested in what?
write-up summaries for newsletter
what to say
greeters?

Meeting Management

Sadly, the weekend had to come to an end. We frolicked and we played, we worked and we engaged, and SBWN will continue to evolve and tear at the fabric in itself as we all continue to find ourselves more or less a part of its happening.

Special thanks to Laurie, who got us all there, but whose spunk we missed greatly, and to Regina for the fabulous food and facilitation. ▼

Let's face it, we all have our problems. Whether it's a perilous polyfidelity predicament or simply how to shop for latex, North bi Northwest is here to help. In keeping with the spirit of bisexuality, we offer more than one reply to each question. Send your queeries to our PO Box; our wisdom-mongers are standing bi.

Dear Answer Amazons,

I met this woman through an ad, and we've had one date. It was a Holiday Present Play Night (we got it on).

Besides that, we've talked on the phone a few times. She seems to want to talk on the phone, but not to get together. I call her and she calls back once, but otherwise doesn't initiate contact. She's got a four-year-old kid and a low-paying job and says she feels too poor to go out right now, and can't afford childcare.

Is she still interested? Do we have any future?

Will I ever get any again?

Desiree

Dear Desiree,

You may not get any more from your ad woman. But yes, you will find love in the future. The Queen guarantees it! Only the ad woman can answer your question. Just ask her. What will you lose? If she says, 'No,' at least you'll have more time to talk with someone else.

One does not need much money to have fun. Invite your friend and her daughter to a walk by the beach or a lake. Go on a picnic. Get to know her better. Discover if there's a future for you two. Just do it!

Don't worry about getting any. When you least expect it Love will come to you or you will come! The Queen wishes you a good love future. Keep up the faith, Desiree. Keep in touch.

Queen of Love

Dear Desiree,

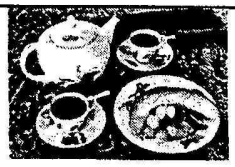
An easy way to test her desire to go out with you again may be to offer to pay for the date (including childcare). If you are truly interested in a relationship with her (rather than just having sex with her), you may also think of something to do with her *and* her child. I can't tell from your letter what you are offering her in terms of relationship other than sex. Most women in her situation really do want aid/relief from their daily grind. Are you offering a time with you that is healing and joyful for her? If you want a future with her, what would that look like? If you can speak that to her in a way that is truly promising, she'll have her laundry done, her bills paid, her child fed — and whatever else it takes — in order to spend time with you.

Love,

Aphrodite

'He is Tall, he is Short; He is Dark, he is light;
'He is strong & weak; He has fears & dreams;
'He laughs at himself & cries for others;
'He is sexy, he is shy; He is human, he is love;
'He is Gay & HE IS PROUD!
'Ending AIDS begins with Pride.'

This is the new Northwest AIDS Foundation tv ad, which airs during prime time shows, starting in mid-March. The ad shows different men, filmed in black and white, with certain words from the voice-over printed on the screen. The purpose is to help build self-esteem in gay men. Pride is a subject to be talked about outside of the month of June. Denial is a main cause of new cases of AIDS. Let NWAF know you support this new tactic in the battle for lives.



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Rain

by Kellie Trujillo

As she sat in front of the long paneglass window, she lost her thoughts of the day in the raindrops that were forming tiny rivers. She relaxed as she watched them weaving their way along imaginary riverbeds, bending around countless unseen boulders to join with other rivers, all running towards the freedom of the lower edge of the thick glass. She tipped her head forward to feel the cool air coming from the glass when a soft shapely silhouette appeared behind her. She watched its movements in the reflection of the rain-covered window. The tall figure seemed to take on a shorter appearance in the reflection, however she could make out the familiar long hair that flowed down acting as a semi-transparent drape that flowed over the exposed body. She felt a soft warmth overtake her as she hesitated, not wanting to turn and break the connection that had formed inside of her between the figure and the window. Instead she poised there, taking in the beauty of the figure and the magical qualities that the window shared with them.

Yellow

by Staci King

I am Yellow.
As yellow as the sun stretching its shimmering rays to meet the cool ocean.
As yellow as a bar of gold shining with value, on display for all to examine.
As yellow as a school bus, full of youth, but always that adult to keep me in line.
As yellow as the stripes on a bumblebee, sweet if unbothered, but don't get me angry; I will sting.

I am not the yellow of a coward afraid to face the threats of my foes.
Not the yellow of a lemon that entices with a sweet smell yet punishes you with its true sour personality.

Sappho

by Denise Ottoson and Marisa Lanning

'A Mother among Daughters: Sappho of Lesbos' or 'The Tenth Muse: Sappho of Lesbos'

Clearly the most celebrated (to some, notorious) woman poet for more than two millennia, Sappho of Lesbos deserves broader modern study and recognition than she gets. The frustration of working on Sappho is that unless some ancient copy of her poetry is uncovered in a dry Egyptian tomb, even her own work is in fragments.

Very little is known about her life. She was born into an aristocratic family (parents Cleis and Skamandronymos) about 620 BCE in Eresus on Lesbos, a Greek island rich in olives and wine just off the coast of what is now Turkey, across the Aegean Sea from mainland Greece. At a time of great political wrangling, she and her family were exiled to Sicily for a time, between 604 and 595, by the current dictator of the island. She was apparently married around this time to Cercolas, another aristocrat from the island of Andros. They had a daughter, Cleis, who inspired several of her poems. Other men in her life were her brothers Charaxos (a wine merchant who incurred her displeasure by spending much money liberating an Egyptian courtesan), Larichos, and Eurygyos. She is also supposed to have had an affair with Alcaeus, another local poet who rivalled her poetic skill and fought in the political wars.

Sappho left the politics to the men. Eventually she became the creative center of a *thiasos* (a women's association) dedicated to Aphrodite at Mitylene, the chief city of Lesbos. It could be viewed as a finishing school for young aristocratic women from the region, a place where they would assemble 'to spend their days in idle, graceful pleasures' like writing poetry. If Sappho's extant poetry is indicative, it was often the last step before marriage. At least two other women (Gorgo and Andromeda) ran rival schools on Lesbos at the time.

Sappho's poetry was direct and clear about her love for other women, even when they were being ritually attached to men. Timas, Mnasidica, Atthis, Anactoria and Gonglya were all addressed, most often with a sense of longing. By the time of her death about 565, she was also recognized as one of the best poets in Greece. Younger poets around the Mediterranean learned her entire works by heart. Three centuries after her death, at the Alexandrian libraries in Egypt, the scholars amassing the greatest collection of culture in the ancient world established and republished her works in nine volumes of lyrical verse and one volume of elegiac verse.

Unfortunately, as Christianity became the dominant religion of the Mediterranean region, Sappho's works were considered an affront to the patriarchal church and systematically destroyed. About 380 CE, the bishop of Constantinople ordered her works burned. The Alexandrian libraries themselves were burned by a Christian mob in 391. In 1073, under papal order, every copy of Sappho's work that could yet be found was burned in Rome and Constantinople.

After that, until the late 19th century, the only bits of Sappho's poetry left were pieces quoted by other authors. Then as archeology became popular and more rigorously carried out, other bits and pieces of her poetry were found on scraps of papyrus. Translations by Mary Barnard, Willis Barnstone, and C.W. Bowra are more complete, if less florid, than those of turn-of-the-century poets Swinburne and Symonds. Even though we have only the fragments of this great work, the power of her words still touches the Aphrodite in each of us.

Readings:

Mary Barnard, translator. *Sappho.* Boston: Shambala Pocket Edition, 1994.

Aliki Barnstone and Willis Barnstone, editors. *A Book of Women Poets from Antiquity to Now.* New York: Schocken Books, 1992.

HE IS MORE THAN A HERO

He is a god in my eyes —
the man who is allowed
to sit beside you — he

who listens intimately
to the sweet murmur of
your voice, the enticing

laughter that makes my own
heart beat fast. If I meet
you suddenly, I can't

speak — my tongue is broken,
a thin flame runs under
my skin; seeing nothing

hearing only my own ears
drumming, I drip with sweat;
trembling shakes my body

and I turn paler than
dry grass. At such times
death isn't far from me.

#39

TONIGHT I'VE WATCHED

The moon and then
the Pleiades
go down

The night is now
half-gone; youth
goes; I am

in bed alone.

#64

IT WAS YOU, ATTHIS, WHO SAID

'Sappho, if you will not get
up and let us look at you
I shall never love you again!

'Get up, unleash your suppleness,
lift off your Chian nightdress
and, like a lily leaning into

'a spring, bathe in the water.
Cleis is bringing your best
purple frock and the yellow

'tunic down from the clothes chest,
you will have a cloak thrown over
you and flowers crowning your hair...

'Praxinoa, my child, will you please
roast nuts for our breakfast? One
of the gods is being good to us:

'today we are going at last
into Mitylene, our favorite
city, with Sappho, loveliest

'of its women; she will walk
among us like a mother with
all her daughters around her

'when she comes home from exile...'
But you forget everything.

#43

AND THEIR FEET MOVE

rhythmically, as tender
feet of Cretan girls
danced once around an

altar of love, crushing
a circle in the soft
smooth flowering grass.

#2

Note: All selections are from Mary Barnard's *Sappho.*

'Volunteer' continued from page 1

with kids; apartment-hunting; back home (often with police escort in case *he* showed up) to get her clothing, important papers, etc. By the time a formal volunteer program was installed, I'd worked there several years. I took the volunteer training, and started working counselor relief shifts, mostly overnight. This involved crisis phone intervention, talking with residents, mediating household disputes, looking after children, *lots* of paperwork.... I've also served on the board, placated neighbors, helped with fundraising, led support groups, painted walls, installed a ceiling, put together a dozen bunk beds....

"Once when telling someone about my Sunday morning shifts, I said, 'It's my going-to-church,' reflecting my sense of grace gained in giving to my community, doing good work for its own sake, serving my sisters and their children.

"I've learned ways to take care of myself — even to be aware of myself — from residents, counselors, fellow workers, and purged the ghosts and horrors of my abusive relationship. I've met lots of wonderful women, and have become friends with some of them. Beyond my birth family, this was my first community of strong women, complex and supportive."

Regina S. works for the **Seattle Crisis Clinic** on the Crisis line. She handles everything from queer youth to relationship problems to potential suicides and homicides. She listens to people and if they are in danger refers them to long term counselors, or to the Community Information Line if they need non-emergency assistance (an example would be a homeless person needing free legal assistance).

She has done this kind of work before, two years ago in Kansas. She has also made a 'serious' suicide attempt of her own, and having been there and come out the other side, knows how to approach people and how to help them. As a bisexual woman, she has had the opportunity to, in her words, 'support bi's to their spouse,' and to offer 'general empathy.'

A typical shift on the Crisis Line runs four and a half hours; she does one a week. She has found the training and the people 'great;' her coworkers are diverse, and also 'like family.' The Crisis Clinic is 'a really wonderful place to work.'

Chris Flanagan would like you to join the **Clinic Defense Project**. She doesn't know how much time she puts in to this project, but it's a lot. This organization, in its 'infancy,' has many members but few 'organizers.' At this point people are at the information gathering stage — networking, writing, researching. Once the actual clinic defense is under way, she expects to spend a few hours a month escorting women past the anti-abortion protestors.

Chris has done clinic defense and escorting before, in New York. She was spurred to action here by the murders in Massachusetts on December 30. And she has some stories to tell. She is very proud of the doctor in Kansas who performed her own abortion for her, as he was a focus of the Operation Rescue there, was shot in the arm, and went back to work in a sling. Ask her about the F.O.R.R. (Feminist Overground Railroad) sometime.

I asked her if she feared for her physical safety doing this kind of work, especially now. She said two things to me: "It's funny, but I'm not really scared of anything.... It feels better to do something than to sit. ▼

SHEEP SHOTS
Oh No! Now those poor people in Oregon are going to be FORCED to give SPECIAL TREATMENT to homoSEXuals!
what's "special treatment?"
© 1992 Roberta Gregory
DAILY BAM
WEEKLY WOOL
you mean, like: folks can't be fired just for being Gay... Gay adolescents not being told by their teachers that they're sick and immoral... protection from harassment and PHYSICAL VIOLENCE...
Uh... I'm not really SURE...
YEAH! ALL that...
..what is this world COMING to?
DAILY BAA

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U.W. Debuts Bi Opera

by Drew Robinson

SBMU suspended their regular 'second-Monday' meeting this month and headed up to the University of Washington's Meany Studio Theater so they could attend the debut of their fellow member, Kam Morrill's operatic comedy/drama: *Rollercoaster*!!! And what a ride it was!

The story focuses on Janet (Halina Newberry) and her roommate/boyfriend Joe (John Clynch) and their attempt to conceal from Janet's parents (Regina Flatt and John Kelleher) the fact that she's living with a man, by dressing him up as a woman! In introducing the production, stage director Shane Rooks commented that 'the more effort we put into creating false images of our lives for the benefit of others, the more likely these efforts are to fail;' and this was certainly the case for our loveable heroes in *Rollercoaster*!!

Unbeknownst to them, Janet's parents have invited along Victor (R. Kenneth Barbo), a 'nice young man they know from church.' (Janet of course was raised Catholic!) 'When will they ever learn?' laments Janet about her parents' efforts to find her the 'right man.' Janet isn't quite Victor's type, but he falls head-over-heels for Joe in drag!!

A family-style trip to the local amusement park for the occasion of Janet's birthday is all it takes for the plot to thicken, as Joe realizes he actually *likes* Victor's attentions, even though he knows Victor thinks he's a woman. Meanwhile, Janet's parents begin to worry that 'Jo' (complete with blonde hair and a red-sequin mini-skirt) is a bad influence on their daughter; perhaps she's even... a *lesbian!!)*

The opera is propelled by Kam's original and inspiring music, brought to life by an orchestra conducted by Adam Stern. The 'rollercoaster' metaphor is used effectively, leaving the audience wondering where this adventure might end!

The issue of bisexuality in the work is handled openly towards the end, leaving each character to deal with the situation on their own terms... you know, just like in *real life!!* Any other type of ending probably would have seemed cliche, or contrived.

Bravo, Kam! We wish you much success with *Rollercoaster*, and in all your future work! Thanks for an enjoyable evening. ▼

Digital Queers are here!

by Lizabeth Coller

There is now a local chapter of the national non-profit organization founded in 1992. DQ is a group of computer technology professionals dedicated to raising money for hardware and software for queer community organizations.

I attended the second meeting of Digital Queers NorthWest to find out what they could do for the several queer groups I'm part of. I walked into the room and was surprised at the number of people. By the time the meeting ended, 35 people were there. But to no surprise, I found I was only the fifth woman, and no more came in. During introductions I found most people are from Microsoft, no surprise there, either. Their six goals are:

Community — serve queer community through donating time, products and expertise;

Activism — support domestic partner benefits, non-discrimination and progressive personnel policies;

Social — provide a forum for members to meet others with similar interests;

Professional — encourage networking for career development;

Educational — evangelize for online communication throughout the G/L/B/T community;

Recreational — produce the best parties at industry events.

They have three different levels of help they can give to non-profit groups. The first and easiest is just helping a group use a product. Sometimes there's software on a computer, but no manuals. Or someone set up some files and left, and the mailing labels are lost somewhere in a computer. Some phone support, or a quick training class can make a big difference.

The second level of help is getting the group on-line. This could mean getting a modem and software to allow the organization to tie in to the queer BBS's. It's a small amount of money, but can mean a lot to a small non-profit group.

The third level is updating. A lot of groups are operating old computers, with old technology. They don't have enough memory to run new programs, or the computer is too slow so they limp through projects. This could mean an overhaul of existing equipment, or more likely new equipment and software. This level also includes groups that don't have any computers at all.

If you are interested in getting together with other hi-tech people, come to a meeting. DQ-NW meets the second Thursday of the month, 7pm, at the New American Grill on Broadway.

For more information, the local chapter can be reached at: DQ-NW, 1202 E. Pike St, Suite 972, Seattle, WA 98122, voice 206-860-6900. The e-mail address is dqnw@aol.com, or digiqueers@aol.com. ▼

Advertising

North Bi Northwest welcomes advertising from bi-friendly businesses, individuals, organizations and services. Our advertising rates are as follows:

Business card size: $10/issue
Quarter page: $20/issue
Half page: $40/issue
Full page: $80/issue

2 consecutive issues: 15% discount
3 consecutive issues: 30% discount

For more information call (206) 783-7987 & leave a message.

CALENDAR

For locations, confirmation, or more information, call the appropriate message machine and someone will get back to you (with discretion if requested). For **SBWN** events call (206) **783-7987**. For all other Seattle events, **(BiNet, SBMU, Polyfi, BiOut, etc.)** Call (206) **728-4533**.
*** denotes multi-gender events.**

Mon Apr 3- SBWN Organizational Meeting 7:15pm.

Sat Apr 8- Polyfidelity Swim Night. 9pm; $7.50. Use back door; Do not arrive early. *

Sun Apr 9- SBWN Mtg. 6pm. 'Open Rap, Newcomer format'.

Mon Apr 10- SBMU meeting. 7pm. 'Pro-gay Western cultural traditions'.

Wed Apr 12- BiNet Mtg. 7pm @ NWAF Office, 127 Broadway E. *

Thu Apr 13- Take Two Film Club. 6:30pm @ Gayla's, N. Queen Anne.

Mon Apr 17- SBWN meeting 7:15pm. 'Organic Gardening'.

Sat Apr 22- Bi Community Earth Day Picnic! 2pm @ Meridian Playground, behind Good Shepherd Center, N 50th St between Sunnyside N & Meridian N. *

Sun Apr 23- SBWN Mtg. 6pm. 'Witches & Goddess worship'.

Mon May 1- SBWN Organizational meeting 7:15pm.

Sun May 7- SBWN Mtg. 6pm. 'Open Rap, Newcomer format'.

Mon May 8- SBMU meeting. 7pm. 'SelfLove'.

Wed May 10- BiNet Mtg. 7pm @ NWAF Office, 127 Broadway E. *

Sat May 13- Polyfidelity potluck. 6:30pm. Pilgrim Congregational Church. *

Sat May 13-Women Take Back the Night, Vivian Rogers 325-5531.

Mon May 15- SBWN meeting 7:15pm. 'Comparing Relationships with Men vs with Women'.

Sun May 21- SBWN Mtg. 6pm. 'Intimacy'.

May 25-29- Folklife Fest, BiNet/Oregon, BiFace/Vancouver visit.

Mon May 29- SBWN meeting 7:15pm. 'Open Rap,' NbiNW mailing party.

Sun June 4- SBWN Organizational meeting, 6pm.

Mon June 12- SBWN Mtg. 7:15pm. 'Open Rap, Newcomer format'.

Sun June 18- SBWN Mtg. 6pm. 'Pet Care,' speaker.

Sun June 25- Seattle Pride March & Rally! *

Mon June 26- SBWN Mtg. 7:15pm. 'Polyfidelity/Nonmonogamy'.

July 8-9- Proposed Northwest Bi Fest.

July 10-12- American Ridge Campout with BiNet/Oregon. *

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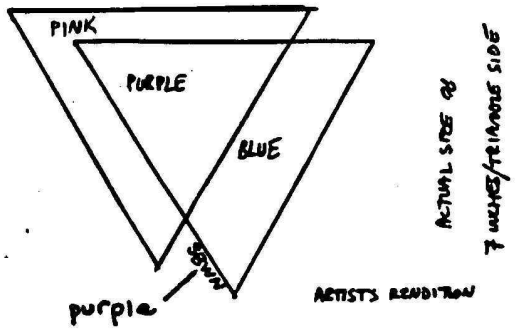
GET THEM AT SBWN MEETINGS AND AT NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY CELEBRATIONS. WE CAN ALSO MAIL THEM FOR AN ADDITIONAL $2 POSTAGE AND HANDLING.



WEAR OUR COLORS WITH BISEXUAL PRIDE!

Local Groups at Your Service

SBWN (Seattle Bisexual Women's Network): Support and discussion groups on alternate Sundays, 6pm, and alternate Mondays, 7:15pm. Organizational meetings first meeting of month. For more information, call our message machine. Note our occasional live phone answer times.

Bluestockings: SBWN-affiliated monthly feminist women's reading group. In addition to feminist writing, readings have included popular fiction, women's history, and a work-in-progress by a member. All women are welcome.

Take Two Film Club: SBWN-affiliated monthly video club. They review each flick after viewing, consensualizing on what they would advise others to take or do two of when seeing it for the first time. (i.e. Take two hands to hold when viewing Kafka for the first time; it's scary.) Meets 2nd Thurs.

SBMU (Seattle Bisexual Men's Union): a men's anti-sexist support and social group with discussion meetings on second Mondays of the month at Pilgrim Congregational Church, room 304 (enter from 10th Av), and monthly social events (location varies).

Polyfidelity Discussion Group: Support group for people in or interested in multipartner relationships. Discussions and literature on responsible nonmonogamy, intimate networks, alternative relationships and community. Bimonthly potluck discussions, 6:30pm @ Pilgrim Congregational Church, 509 10th Av E, Seattle; alternate month social events.

Second bi 2nd: a floating bi-friendly social event held each month. We go canoeing, read stories, listen to jazz, do brunch... Date varies.

BiNet, the Bisexual Network of Seattle: a multi-gender, multicultural profeminist group dedicated to providing information about bisexuality, promoting bisexual visibility, and developing community.

BiOut Speakers Bureau: available for engagements at schools, businesses, counseling centers, churches, etc. to provide information and answers about bisexuality.